

Special Event? Or Business Advertising?

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Like many others this past weekend [April 4-5], I made contact with one of the Disney ARC stations operating to commemorate the opening of the Euro Disney Resort in Paris, France. After all, with a full-color picture on the front of the April issue of *QST*, how could I miss the event? Of course, I sent for the certificate.

However, in reflecting on the contact and the publicity surrounding the event, I began to wonder if this was an appropriate use of Amateur Radio frequencies.

Now don't get me wrong. My contact was with the Orlando station, but I listened to other operators from California and Tokyo. There was never any hint of commercialism. There were no suggestions, either overt or subtle, to "Come on down and join the fun." Never. Not once. Nevertheless, this was an event with the sole purpose of commemorating the opening of a commercial establishment.

Perhaps an example will serve to illustrate my point. Assume, for the moment, that I decide to open Chet's Car Wash in Sharon, New Hampshire, where I live. Let's also assume that I decide to operate a Special Event Station to commemorate the event. Of course, I would operate the station with the same ethics applied by the Disney operations—no suggestion, either overt or subtle, to "Come on down and join the fun." Would this operation be

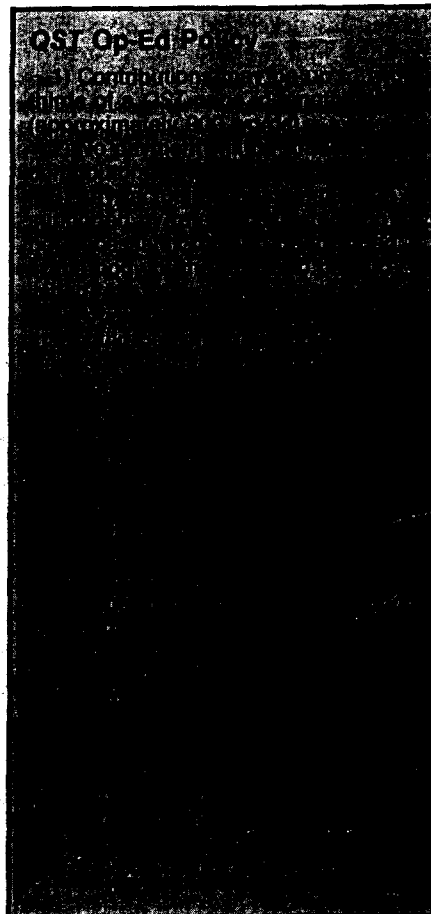
appropriate? Would *QST* publish a full-color photograph on the cover to provide advance publicity about my Special Event? Probably not.

Several friends have suggested that the Disney operation was harmless. "After all," they argue, "Amateur Radio needs a 'shot in the arm.' Public exposure from events like Disney are good for the hobby and therefore good for all of us." It's hard to refute that logic.

On the other hand, where do you draw the line regarding commercial use of the amateur frequencies? What differentiates a truly amateur operation from one designed to publicize a business? How much "free" advertising did Disney derive from the operation this past weekend? How much is it worth to have a full-color picture on the cover of *QST*? Why is a Special Event commemorating the opening of the Euro Disney Resort appropriate when most people would agree that it would not be appropriate to hold a similar event commemorating the opening of Chet's Car Wash?

The ARRL has recently presented a letter to the FCC's Private Radio Bureau proposing a restatement of the Commission's rules governing permissible communications in the Amateur Radio Service. Hopefully, the discussions surrounding the proposed changes will help eliminate the confusion which currently exists regarding these issues. However, in the meantime, I believe that operations such as the Disney Special Event inappropriately stretch the limits of

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the current definitions of the Amateur Radio Service.



Strays



BARCELONA OLYMPIC AWARD

□ To celebrate the Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain, radio amateurs in the Olympic city and in other Olympic subcenters will be on the air from 0000Z June 20 to 2400Z July 17. Operations will be on 10, 15, 20, 40, 80 and 160 meters using SSB, CW, RTTY, AMTOR, SSTV and packet. The event is open to all licensed radio amateurs and shortwave listeners worldwide. Exchange call sign and RS(T). Each contact with AM25 or AO25 stations counts as one point, and contacts with official Olympic center and sub-center stations are worth five points. Stations may be worked on different bands and modes after 24 hours. Awards will be given to the overall champion, the highest-scoring station on each continent and for the highest score in each country; award winners must score at least 100 points, one of which must be with

Barcelona. Logs must show call signs, exchanges, date and time of each contact (UTC), RS(T) sent and received, band, mode and score.

Send logs by September 1, 1992, to Comite Organizador Actividades Radioamateurs Barcelona-92 (HF Award), PO Box 1461, 08080 - Barcelona, Spain.

Official Olympic center and subcenter call signs are the following:

EH92B, Barcelona
EH92A, Banyoles
EH92C, Catelldelfels
EH92D, Badalona
EH92G, Granollers
EH92H, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat
EH92I, Viladecans
EH92L, Sabadell
EH92M, Mollet
EH92N, Valencia
EH92R, Reus
EH92S, Sant Sadurni D'Anoia
EH92T, Terrassa
EH92U, Seu D'Urgell
EH92V, Vic
EH92Z, Zaragoza

I would like to get in touch with...

□ amateurs living in close proximity (less than two miles) to high-power broadcast transmitters, such as Voice of America, BBC, Deutsche Welle, Radio France International, and so on. I'd like to exchange ideas and experience with high-quality receiver front end filters. Franz Friedrich, DJ2MM, Friedrich Eberstr 6, D-5170/Juelich, Germany.

IS YOUR CLUB PLANNING TO HOLD AN UPGRADE EXAMINATION?

If you haven't lined up a VE Team or a coordinating VEC, the ARRL/VEC will be glad to help.

ARRL VEC

Call 1-800-927-7583

for details.